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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [OSCE](#) [GG](#)
SUBJECT: SOUTH OSSETIA: SHOOTINGS AND ACCUSATIONS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, a.i., Mark X. Perry for reasons 1.4(b)
&(d).

11. (C) OSCE Political Advisor Gantcho Gantchev told us August 6 that South Ossetian accusations of a Georgian "terrorist attack" August 3 should not be taken too seriously. In the incident, a bomb reportedly exploded in Tskhinvali, damaging a gas station but causing no injuries. The next day the South Ossetians announced they would not attend a Joint Control Commission (JCC) meeting planned for August 9-10 unless it was held in Tskhinvali or Moscow. The explosion came a few days after the South Ossetians had claimed to have defused two other explosive devices. Gantchev said OSCE monitors were reporting that the incident did not appear serious, and he speculated that local "FSB or KGB" in South Ossetia had "developed it for propaganda" purposes. He noted that the incident was conveniently timed to support the South Ossetians' claims that the security situation was not safe enough for them to attend the JCC meeting in Tbilisi August 9-10. Gantchev said that OSCE had not yet given up on the meeting, despite the South Ossetians' announcement they would not participate, and he expressed hope that visiting Russian envoy Yuri Popov would be able to get the JCC meeting back on track during consultations on August 6-7.

12. (C) Gantchev also confirmed reports of a shooting incident August 4 in the area of Prisi in the conflict zone, which left one Ossetian and one Georgian wounded -- the Ossetian seriously. Gantchev said it was not yet clear how the shooting started, but there were suspicions the initial firing came from South Ossetian positions close to the scene.

PERRY